

June 10-11, 2023
Washington D.C., USA



NORTH AMERICAN SCHOOL OF INTERNET GOVERNANCE

ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION

2023 North American School of Internet Governance (NASIG)

June 10-11 2023 – American University

(raw transcript)

02 Keynote: A Global Perspective on Inclusion and Accessibility - Derrick Cogburn

>> Derrick Cogburn: Thank you so very much Diana. And thank you Eduardo for the opening to this very exciting two-day conference here at American university., we are excited, my colleagues and I to contribute to this initiative and I did want to take one moment while I share my screen.

I did want to take one moment to thank my colleagues. I happen to be the person who's here, the faculty member who's here representing our collaboration that led to this wonderful summer school. But I wanted to thank -- can somebody change this?

>> (Away from microphone).

>> Derrick: All right. Great.

So I wanted to thank my colleagues that are not here that represent the group of organizations that have come together here at American university. And first and

foremost, vice provost Burley talked about our inconclusive tech policy initiative. This is something that is really exciting here on campus. It is an initiative, what we call a strategic research initiative that brings together organizations across campus that are all committed to inclusive technology and policy. And so we have as participants in that group Sasha. Sasha is not here today. Kathleen works very, very closely with Sasha. We have nan net. We have Gary. Myself. And Diana that all play a critical role in bringing this initiative together and hain, another of our colleagues who we just found out that we're losing to another university down south. So we have brought together a number of organizations across campus. So my institute on disability and public policy has played a lead role in this initiative because it's so central to what we're doing. But we also have the technology law and security initiative and our Internet governance lab. So all of us coming together to support this really, really exciting initiative. So what I'm going to do today is spend a little bit of time motivating you to think like I do. That's what all good professors do, we want you to think just like we do. Of course that's not true. But I do want to spend some time helping you think about how important it is in all of the work that you do to think about inclusion: So think about inclusion for persons with disabilities, inclusion for people all around the world, people with different points of view and perspective. People from the global south. A broad way of thinking about inclusion. So for me -- I see little hands clapping. Thank you. That's pretty neat. (Chuckles). That's exactly what we want to focus on. I wanted to start by saying a little bit about my background and to kind of shape how I got to this focus where I spend so much time on inclusion. So I have been fortunate to have appointments at three universities. First university was the University of Michigan, school of information. And there my career was able to really focus on the use of information technology for inclusion, broadly speaking.

We had a global graduate seminar between six Universities. So American university was one of those six. So American university, Howard University, and the University of Michigan partnering with the university of Ford heir, the university of Pertoria and the university of Vatasan. So going back to 1998, we were teaching online this global graduate seminar. And it was if he nominal. That's one example of how I used information technology to facilitate inclusion early on. And then I moved to Syracuse University, the school of information at Syracuse. The next big change in my work came with a focus on disability inclusion. So I was already working on inclusion but I went to -- I was invited by our vice president for research to go to lunch with a faculty member we were recruiting and this is a name I'd like to you remember. His name is Peter Blonk. Ph.D. and law professor and has a long focus on ADA and understanding the Americans with Disabilities Act and Peter was being recruited to come to American University. We should have recruited him. He was being recruited to come to serious university and our vice provost

for research said, you know, Dr. Cogburn would you go to lunch with Peter and talk about how supportive our research infrastructure has been here at Syracuse. And I did because I had a great fortune to have a lot of sponsored research while I was at Michigan and Syracuse. So I went to lunch with Peter and Peter said tell me what you do. I started talking about how all the work we've done, all the work we did around the world using information technology to facilitate inclusion. And I talked about global virtual teams and virtual organizations and all of these things and Peter just sat there and he listened and he said that sounds interesting. And he said, well, what about people with disabilities? And I said what do you mean, Peter? He said think about this vision that you have of this globalized connected hyper connected world where people can work on virtual consulting teams and apply to a grant and administer a project from anywhere in the world. You can live anywhere you want to. Think about that vision that you have and if it doesn't include persons with disabilities and make sure they can participate how you're excluding them from that world. And when he said that as simple as it was, it was like a ton of bricks hit me in the head. It was since then everything I've done is focused on making sure we include persons with disabilities. One of the things you'll hear me say is we have so many technologies, so many policies, so many standards that if we follow those, it's no problem. The world can be -- and our digital world can be completely accessible. If we don't follow those, it's like looking at a blank screen, just looking like that, right? But if we follow those standards it can be as accessible as possible. So those were two Bic changes in my career that then led me to American University. And the big shift for me was saying can we bring all of those things together. So we here at American university. When I first got here in 2009, in 2010 we launched as IDDP, the institute on disability and public policy, the world's first graduate degree on disability and public policy. So we took all we had learned about global -- globally distributed inclusive education, because we were doing it between South Africa and United States and HBCUs and research one Universites, all of those things together, and now we said let's focus on persons with disabilities. And we were at a time when the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities was at its very early stages and I'm going to talk about that a little bit more. This global policy framework for persons with disabilities. And we said how can we make sure that more persons with disabilities can understand what their rights are and can engage in the processes locally to be able to advocate for themselves. And if necessary, escalate that up to the committee on the rights of persons with disabilities and so forth. So we launched this master's degree supported by substantial investments from the NIPAN foundation in Japan and launched a masters of comparative and international disability policy focused on southeast Asia, the ten countries of Asean and we provided full fellow ships for American University's master degree for persons who were blind and visually impaired, deaf and hard of hearing, and mobility

impaired all from southeast Asia. And one of the things that this allowed us to do was not only to include those students in our first American University's first fully online master's degree as well but we were able to tap into the AU faculty across campus to teach economics and public policy and international affairs, but we were also able to tap into faculty members across the world to teach in this master's program. So one of the people you're going to hear from tomorrow afternoon virtually unfortunately because I'd like to you meet him personally is ambassador Giagos. How many have heard of him? A few of you. So he's the ambassador from eke door and he chaired the UN convention -- I'm sorry the task force to negotiate the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. We were able to have him as one of our faculty members teaching our students about the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. So this distributed environment allowed us to be able to bring faculty members like ambassador Giagos together. So I just wanted to tell that you little bit about my background to help you see how this is something that you can start to focus on now and continue throughout your research and practice career. So I wanted to share a little bit about my research trajectory in this space as well. So I first start writing about Internet governance in 1998. I started thinking about how telecommunications policy was changing. I did a lot of work on regime formation and local governance and how the various actors were coming together to govern this space and I was particularly concerned at that point about how developing countries and civil society organizations can or cannot -- or could or could not participate in that process. I was one of the early advocates pushing for what we've started to understand as this multistakeholder global governance approach, where it's not just governments, not just developed country governments but developing countries governments, private sector, civil society organizations can all come together and I meant to highlight that. So if you look at my background, you see that there's experience not only in academia but in the private sector, in international organizations, in regional organizations, in civil society organizations. So I kind of felt like I was a perfectly placed to talk about multistakeholder participation. So I wrote about that early on right about the time that ICANN was being formed. In 2003 I continued to write about that particularly concerned again about how developing countries and regions, particularly the Africa region was able to participate in these processes. Those of you that have participated in ICANN and IGF over the years have known that we have put a particular emphasis on capacity building is one of the phrases that we use. How can we get more people just like what we're doing this weekend to be able to go into next week and be more effective as an international -- or at a meeting like ICANN or any of the other global governance processes? That takes capacity building, effort, attention, and resources to be able to strength then those actors to participate. We wrote about the U.S. role in global Internet governance in a. We participated in thinking

about how distributed collaboration could effect the global disability community as well. This was a really interesting article around cyberinfrastructure that was reflected in some of the work on the National Science Foundation on virtual organizations and cyberinfrastructure. And then my colleagues and I Lori and Nanette and Francesco we wrote a book on the role of Internet governance. The role Internet providers could make on making rules on who has access, who doesn't, what's done with resourcing and so forth. Slightly before that, in 2006, in the -- as a corollary to the international communication association annual meeting, we formed Giga net. How many have you been to one? GIGANET is the global Internet global access network. In Germany to launch this organization. So it was the world's first academic association fully focused on Internet governance issues. Highly interdisciplinary, bringing together technical actors, public policy, legal scholars, from all over the world to study Internet governance and those of you that haven't been to a GIGANET conference I encourage to you pay attention to it. Go back to the archives. Look at the range of papers that have been included in the GIGANET archives. It is something I think you will benefit from. Then in 2006 following the world's summit on information society, the Internet Governance Forum was launched, the IGF in Athens. That was a phenomenal meeting because it started to bring together all of these activities related to Internet governance. And, you know, I wrote about the whyser's process on our trans advocacy process. Making disability rights real in southeast Asia and our most recent book on researching Internet governance is also public yished open access and available for anybody to use thanks to a wonderful grant that we were able to get. So what I'd like to do is talk a little bit about grand challenges in disability inclusive sustainable development. Because it's something I want you all to be motivated about and think about how you can make a contribution. So when we think about grand challenges, this is a concept that has challenged

scientific and scholarly communities for decades and what a grand challenge is is one of the ways in which we can harness all of the resource that is we have. So grand challenges focus on big, persistent, important societal challenges. And these are challenges that can't be addressed by any one community, any one actor. It requires us to work together. And think about what we do in the ICANN, IGF Internet government space broadly, thinking about that multistakeholder ebb environment, requires all of these different disciplines to come together. Even on the scholarly side. Legal scholars, public policy scholars, economic scholars, technology scholars, all of these different disciplines coming together. But it also can't be solved just by academia. Can't be solved just by governments, just by the private sector, just by civil society. Really requires all of us to come together to solve these kinds of problems. The iconic grand challenges, of course, you know, the Kennedy -- president Kennedy's challenge to launch man space flight and all of the disciplines that came

together to make that happen. Grand challenges have exposed on things like new ways of teaching and learning. New material science and robotics. There have been development challenges launched by USAID. The MDGs really focused on the grand challenge of trying to address poverty and how do we bring all the resources together that we need to address poverty. But one of the things that you might find interesting, and I'll hit a little bit harder later is that the millennium development goals made absolutely no reference to persons with disabilities. So you're trying to eradicate poverty, recognizing the number of persons with disabilities that are in countries, that are emerging, that are themselves living in poverty and it did not recognize persons with disabilities. So when the sustainable development goals, the SDGs, succeeded the MDGs, it did have a focus on disability and we're going to talk about that and talk about how that arrived as well. So the last sort of foundational element I want to talk about is Amartya Sen. How many of you know his work? A couple of hands. This book, development as freedom to me is phenomenal and some of you may know that he won the Noble prize for economics and the idea about development as freedom. So does anybody know the sort of core change in how we think about development came about as a result of Amartya Sen? Anybody have a sense? So prior to Amartya Sen, we talked about it mostly in GDP, how much economic growth was happening in a country. Of course that's important but all of us know is that the only thing important when we think about development in a country? No. It's not. Just like when we think about the Internet and Internet development just looking at penetration rates and so forth, that's not enough to think about development with the Internet. It's not enough just to think about the pipes. We have to think about the water, what goes through the pipes. How do we use that to achieve what yarm which is broad based economic development, education, healthcare, access for women to education, life expectancy. All of these different ways of thinking about development holistically. And he was able to say with this idea of development as freedom is that the more developed the country is, the more freedoms it allows. The more freedoms you have, everybody in that country has to choose where you go to school where you live, where you work, to live independently. To access transportation to play sports. The more developed a country is the more you have the ability to choose. So his idea of development as freedom was very powerful. And he also talked about unfreedoms. Barriers. So we looked at this room and I saw my friend here. I'm going to -- I don't want to impairs you but I wanted to make a comment. Unfreedoms, barriers make it difficult for you to do whatever it is you want to do. So if you build a room like this where the main seating area is down here, down a set of six stairs, and you want everybody to be able to come in here and participate, you've put barriers in place. Those stairs are unfreedoms. Now that's addressed by having an accessible elevator right on the outside, but you probably could have designed a better access to this room if you were

thinking about the needs of persons with disabilities, right? That happens all the time. Where the accessible entrance is around the back by the trashcans, right? Because you didn't think about the needs of persons with disabilities. So Amartya Sen and this idea of development of freedom is critical. I was so happy that my friend and colleague Victor Penada actually knows Amartya Sen and I'm going to talk a little bit about Victor as we go along. But the fact that Sen's work is so central to this idea of what it means to be inclusive that I wanted to highlight his work. So let's talk about disability and development. That's what we mean by grand challenges. Everybody follow that so far? That we need all the disciplines, all the stakeholders, all the sectors to be able to come together to address big problems like inconclusive technology and policy. Inclusive Internet development, right? We need everybody. We need all these ideas to come together. So now let's talk about disability and accessibility. So why should we care about this? And vice provost Burley and I were at a meeting this weekend. She got to hear me talk about this because I talk about three rationales for why you should care. The first rationale is that it's the right thing to do. So in 2011 there was a landmark study came out published by the World Bank and WHO called the world disability report. When that report came out it sort of startled everybody because it found the World Bank and the WHO found that there were more than a billion people in the world living with some form of disability. At the time that was about 10 percent of the world's population, living with some form of disability. Much higher than we thought. Now the number is 1.3 billion and about 16 percent of every country's population. So the numbers are huge. In the U.S., some of the numbers suggest as high as 23 percent persons with disabilities. So we think these numbers are low and undercounting and they're still staggering. So it's the right thing to do. You know, many persons with disabilities are living in developing countries. Just by thinking about the number of persons with disabilities we should care about and engage in disability. Look at those numbers and look at the environment here. These numbers means that out of all of us here most of us either are a person with disability, we either have a disability ourselves, we know somebody with a disability in our family or somebody close to us, or we will become disabled in our lifetime. And that could happen over time. You know, some people are born with a disability. Some people develop a disability over time. Right? You could trip and fall down the stairs and now suddenly need to be using a wheelchair. You might be mobility impaired either for a short period of time or long period. You might wake up and this has happened to some very prominent people and something has happened and you can no longer see, your vision may continue to degrade. Your hearing may continue to get worse. This could happen to any of us. So it's the right thing to do.

The second rationale is an economic rationale. That people with disabilities and their families will make decisions about where they apply for jobs, where they apply for

university or where they apply to work in a civil society organization, where they shop, if your Web site is not accessible, they will choose to go somewhere else. If your university admissions processes are not accessible or your conference is not accessible, they'll go somewhere else. So there is an economic rationale to say let's make our processes as accessible as possible and welcome and encourage persons with disabilities to come. Let me give you an example. So in Ecuador in habitat three in Kito, 2015 maybe. Somebody check it up -- look up your Internet devices there and tell me.

Habitat three in Ecuador. I think it was 2015. One of the things they did I thought was phenomenal, how many of you have ever used mapping software to get around a city or something like that? How many of you have used things like open table to make reservations, things like that, right? So think about a person with a disability trying to get around a city, town, or make reservations and wondering if I make a reservation at that restaurant can I actually get in? Is there an accessible entrance? Is it bright enough for me to be able to see my sign language interpreter's hands. Can I hear? You know, all kinds of things. So there is a set of mapping applications that are designed now to map spaces for accessibility globally and to make a global database available so if you're trying to decide I want to go to that restaurant and I have my particular needs, can I go to that restaurant? Is that something I can recommend? So Ecuador that was hosting this conference in 2000 --

>> (Away from microphone).

>> Thank you. I was pretty close.

>> 2016, decided if you're going to be inviting 10,000 advocates, disability advocates and others to come to town, why don't we use that as an opportunity to map Kito. So they had a Map athon. They invited all these UN delegates to use the app to map the accessibility of all these restaurants and parks and so forth. And it built up the database for accessible restaurants, accessible everything in Kito. What do you think they did afterwards? Remember this is the economic rationale. They started to market Kito as disability accessible tourist destination. To say culminate to Kito. You know exactly where you can go. Where the spaces are you can go and so forth. So there's an economic rationale and you want to harness the talents of persons with disabilities. So now if the moral rationale doesn't move you and the economic rationale doesn't move you for why we should include persons with disabilities, there's the hammer, the legal rationale. It's the law so in the United States we have a whole series of policy and legal frameworks that make it required under certain circumstances for qualified persons with disabilities and to enter the university or anybody to enter spaces and so forth because we have an Americans with Disabilities Act which is in its 25th year I think it is now. We have section 508 of the

rehabilitation act that talks about electronic resources and so forth. So it's the law. So there is a rising set of legal challenges to Universities and organizations that say hey, wait a minute. I'm qualified to go to your university and your admission process is not accessible. I can't even see the button to push to submit my application. I'm going to file a lawsuit against you.

I'm going to ask you to change it first but I'm going to file a lawsuit against you. I come to your university and here you are having all these videos and none much it's closed captioning. I'm going to file a lawsuit against you so that legal hurdle or hammer is there because you have to do it. And if you don't, under certain circumstances you are going to face these legal challenges. Now one of the interesting things is that globally -- so that's the legal infrastructure in the United States. But globally that infrastructure is being now spread around the world through the use of the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. So the CRPD helps us to understand that persons with disabilities around the world are facing barriers and transportation, information and communication technology, education, employment, political representation, all of these areas and we also recognize that for each of those barriers, there are solutions. The grand challenges that we talked about.

If I were a young person and not looking towards the end of my career, I would be so excited about all of the things that I could do, right? All the technologies I could use to overcome some of these problems. So if you think about the challenges, so when I look at challenges, I look at the opportunities, what can we do about that? So if you look at the challenges to transportation where persons with disabilities can't get on the bus, can't get on the subway, can't buy a ticket, those kinds of things, how do you overcome those? Lots of technologies that can address those challenges. Let me give you one other example. When you travel internationally -- let's imagine you're a person who is blind or visually impaired and you want to pay somebody for -- you know, you give them some currency to -- for a certain they provided and they give you change back and they tell you they've given you ten euro back. How do you know that they've given you ten euro? Unless, you know, somebody's there to help you or something like that. You're trusting them so you can'ting very independent if you just trusting them. Well, there are technology that is let you pick up your smartphone, scan that currency and it will tell you what currency it is and in what denomination. That's a cool feature. Those kinds of technology features are absolutely amazing. And in each of the areas where there's a boundary or a barrier, there are technological solutions that either exist or that we can address them. So for physical mobility impaired disabilities, we have ramps and curb cuts and touch screens and so forth. A lot of this comes from the architectural concept of universal design: So with

universal design, you design things that are accessible but they benefit everyone. So going back to this room. So this -- I pointed out an accessibility barrier in this room for person that's mobility impaired, that's using a wheelchair or using a cane to get in. It's hard to get in this room. Well, what if you're pulling your bag from the hotel and trying to get down here? It's difficult for you too. If you're push ago baby stroller and trying to get in here, it's difficult for you too. So curb cuts and doors that open automatically benefit all of us. So when we think about universal design, we design that way. I'm part of something called the universal design commission and we developed a set of standards for buildings and let me just give you another example. So if there was an emergency right now, we would probably hear a sound, a buzzer that would go off, and that might be it. So that's great for people that can hear. But if you can't hear, how do you know what's happening? Right? So you need a visual indicator as well. But if you can't see, how do you know, you know, that there is an emergency? So the idea is to think through all of these issues as early as possible. So for people who are blind and visually impaired, there are audible symbols for things that we need. There are screen readers. You know, for some people in this -- I don't know this audience in particular, but some people sit here and they say I'm so curious, I wonder how a person who's blind uses the Internet. Have you ever wondered that? How does that happen? How do they use the Internet? Why are we talking about making the Internet accessible to persons with disabilities, a person who's blind? How can they use the Internet? Well, they can use screen readers. Screen readers are so powerful if the technology and the information is designed appropriately, a person who uses a screen reader can access digital information faster than you can with your eyes. So how many of you have ever heard a person listening to a screen reader? Yeah? Now, I'm going to ask that slightly differently. How many of you have heard it the way that they listen to it? Not the way that they adjusted it for you? So some of you. So usually if you're trying to show somebody a screen reader, you have to slow it down for it to be even perceptible in terms of what's happening. If you listen it to the way a person who's blind uses a screen reader it goes so fast. You heard it, right? And you're like what are they doing? But they can go through the whole Web site and they know when to push a button, what content is there, how to jump around the Web site if it's designed appropriately. If not, it's like this. Nothing. So it goes from being able to access the information faster than you can to nothing if you put the barrier in place of not following the standards: It's amazing, right? So people who are deaf and hard of hearing, there are also solutions for what they face. So visual alarms and signals. Virtual sign language interpretation. AI-based sign language interpretation is on the horizon as well.

So all of these solutions, these grand challenges are augmented by the CRPD, UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. So this was the first treaty, human

rights of the 21st century and it's also a development instrument. So let me just kind of say that again. This is a global treaty that has multiple purposes. It's a human rights instrument. So the UN office of the high commissioner for human rights administers this treaty. It's a traditional human rights treaty with all the protections, the Paris principles, everything that goes along with the human rights treaty is the CRPD but it's also a development instrument. And it's the fastest growing treaty in history. 186 countries have fully ratified the CRPD. 146 countries the optional protocol which strengthens it even further. Look at this from Article one of the CRPD. To promote, protect, and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities and to promote respect for their inherent dignity. That's a huge ask, right? And so the CRPD helps us to move from historically what was called a medical model, a charity based where you are, let me see what I can do to help, I'll let one person in or I'm going to try to help you if I can, you know, charity is good. You know, charity is a good thing but the idea of having to rely on somebody else's goodwill for your fundamental human freedoms, not so good. So this treaty represents a shift from this medical model to a rights based social justice model. That a person with a disability has the right to education, the right to employment, the right to transportation, the right to a whole series of rights in different areas. This is the CRPD -- which this is what the CRPD covers. Fifty articles. So think about what you're interested in, see if you can find it here, right? Women, children, legal representation, employment, information access. All of that is represented here by the CRPD. Almost every area of human existence is represented by the CRPD. Persons with disabilities are represented in everything that we do or should be. So there's a phrase in the disability community which is nothing about us without us. Don't do anything without thinking about persons with disabilities. And they've adopted that phrase from nothing about us without us to nothing without us. Because persons with disabilities should have access to everything. So in our work we focused on some of these more than others. So article eight focuses on awareness raising. And I like to show this to students sometimes because I like to think about -- Kathleen, do you think I could get some water, please? Thank you.

I like to ask students to think -- I'll go back to this for a second. To think about if you were doing research, thinking about a long-term project, could you find space within this to do research? So awareness raising. If you look at each one -- the language in the CRPD is so evocative. So it's encouraging states parties to raise awareness through society and at the family level to foster respect for the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities, to combat stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices, and to promote awareness and the capabilities and contributions of persons with disabilities. So think about all of the countries and all of the projects where you could be raising awareness about persons with

disabilities. Campaigns for the contributions of persons with disabilities have made, ways of reducing stigma around persons with disabilities. Accessibility, article nine focus on both electronic accessibility and physical. So you could be conducting audits of physical spaces around you and audits of digital and electronic information for all of your organizations you should already be doing that. You should know how accessible is your Web site. How accessible is your digital infrastructure. You should know so that you know what you need to do to address it. So every one of you should be doing that.

Article 21, freedom of expression, are you allowing people to communicate in the languages that they're most comfortable with, right? Are you providing -- thank you so much Kathleen. Are you providing sign language interpretation? Are you providing multi lingual content? Are you providing clear and easy to understand versions of complex work that you produce? Article 24, education, this drove a lot of the work we did with a lot of our virtual master's degree, inclusive education. Article 29, participation in political life and one more that I have been focusing on is article 30 on access to sport, recreation and leisure, that everybody including children should have access to sport, recreation and leisure. This idea of a no gap policy, I'm going to move along because I want to make sure we have enough time for questions. The no gap policy is just like our multistakeholder policy, our multi stakeholder approach and governnness in a, nobody can do it alone. To think about a person that needs to live independently, be able to have transportation independently, work or go to school some place independently, have recognize are aition and leisure independently, all of those things are done by public, private sector, NGOs, state, local, federal, international, all different levels. And so the convention has convention bodies like the conference committee on the rights of persons with disabilities. That is able to hear complaints at a national level. So if a country has ratified the optional protocol, remember I said that a person can elevate their complaint? They can actually make a complaint directly to the committee on the rights of persons with disabilities if the country has signed the optional protocol. So and we've done some work looking at the implementing the CRDP throughout ASEAN, southeast Asia. There are a lot of regional initiatives that have tried to localize the approach to the global CRPD and one of those that I particularly like is something called the make the right real campaign for the Asia Pacific. And we'll talk about that in just a moment. So the sustainable development, I want to talk just briefly about these other global strategic frameworks because I think this helps us to see the interrelationship between a number of other areas that are important to us on a daily basis. So if we move from the CRPD and go back to the SDGs, so remember when I talked about the Milt len yum development goals, so how much was disability mentioned in the millennium development goals? Zero, not one word. So now I'm telling you 10 percent, 16 percent of the world's population and you're not mentioning that at all as you're trying to

achieve development goals. So the sustainable development goals as a result of pretty aggressive advocacy through transnational advocacy organizations related to disability and we study carefully five different transnational advocacy organizations and disability we're able to get live references to persons with disabilities in the SDGs, 11. Now, that's important. I know some people don't think these international treaties and strategic framework have any value whatsoever, I can argue that too but to think about how a tool like this can bring the world together can help achieve this grand challenge of bringing different forces, public sector, private sector NGOs, all together at least pulling in the same direction, I see value there and to have disability as a target in goal four, eight, ten, 11, and 17 is really huge. So education, employment, inequality, cities and then also how do you implement the SDGs? So the world summit on the information society that we talked about earlier and I talked about the work that we did there and the Internet Governance Forum that came out of the WSIS. When WSIS ended there were WSIS action lines. You're going to hear tomorrow from the ITU director general Doreen Martin because the ITU was at the center of this process of leading the world summit on the information society. And when it finished it had action lines. There's an interesting overlap between the WSIS action lines and the SDGs. So we can think about where technology can achieve those development goals and how that technology is accessible to achieve sustainable -- inclusive sustainable development goals. This is a really nice Web site if you get to chance to look at it it's sort of hitting down here but I can send it to everybody but what this does, looks at the relationships between the SDGs and WSIS action lines. We also have things like W3C, World Wide Web consortiums Web accessibility initiative. There are a couple of things important here. One is the set of guidelines promoted for Web accessibility. So another acronym I'll throw at you is WCAG. Does everybody know? Some? Good. So WCAG is the Web content accessibility guidelines. And for a long time, WCAG2.0 was the standard for thinking about all digital information making it accessible. The new west is WCAG2.2 I think it is, which is slightly more advanced but if you want to not have your Web site or digital this was look like this, you follow the WCAG standards and it looks like this. It's fully accessible. I'm just doing that for dramatic purposes. I don't know how accessible this is. So there is a policy, a set of standards to follow to make your technology accessible. Make your app accessible, make your Web site accessible, make your documents accessible. So if everybody's trying to be helpful you write this report and you want everybody to see it and you put it out and don't follow WCAG standards you are excluding people who are blind and visually impaired right off the bat. Put out your video, don't make it accessible, you're excluding people who are deaf and hard of hearing. So we have policies and standards that we can use. And as I mentioned, make the right real campaign to me was an incredibly interesting regional initiative so for the Asia Pacific region they developed

something called the Incheon strategy to make the right real. What's the right that they're talking about?

>> (Away from microphone).

>> Anything else?

That's definitely part of it. Make the right real.

>> Not only about the strategy, only the strategy but the action to make it so it could be practical.

>> Absolutely. So let's build on that so when I talked about the CRPD, what was the CRPD about?

>> Rights, right? But was it just about one right? It was about 50 sets of rights. So this campaign was about making all of those rights real. Not just on paper, not just on a treaty that 182 countries have ratified but making it real down on the ground. It's so interesting to me for example the universal declaration of human rights. How many of you have read it? It applies to everybody in here but most people have never read it have no idea what the UDHR is, right? So persons with disabilities that haven't read the CRPD and don't know what their rights are don't have the ability to advocate for those rights and at times who want to help persons with disabilities who don't know what those rights are can't advocate for them either. And so to make the right real campaign is to say let's get it all the way down to the ground at a regional level so people know what their rights are, they can advocate for those rights and try to make them real.

So another big development is around cities, inclusive cities. So you've already seen in the SDGs trying to be more accessible to people with disabilities. Habitat three took that a step higher. Habitat three focused -- developed something called the new urban agenda it has a very interesting way of incorporating the needs of persons with ability did as. I have been very close to a lot of these initiatives and one of our AU alumni -- alumna was in sort of Indonesia when this final draft of the new urban agenda was being developed and helped to get those rights for persons with disabilities included in the new urban agenda. So that advocacy on the part of disability rights organizations have been critical. And then lastly, so we talked -- cities, making cities inclusive and accessible, and lastly is disaster risk reduction. So global warming is real. My colleagues who don't believe that notwithstanding, the last few days have helped us to see how real some of these threats are but all of the natural disasters that we've encountered, Katrina, Andrew, Henry, whatever -- you know, all of these different storms that are increasing in intensity and

frequency are causing more and more natural disasters. And even here in the you see, under Katrina, the number of persons with disabilities that struggled in that process couldn't get out of buildings, couldn't get out of nursing homes, couldn't get into shelters. And this is happening around the world. Natural disasters are increasing all around the world. So the framework on disaster risk reduction came out of the Sendai conference which was in Sendai Japan. The nope supported a lot of our work supported that conference to make it the most successful UN conference in history. I always like to tell people that organizing conferences if you want to think about making your conference accessible, look at how the Sendai conference was organized and replicate it which they had a lot of money to make it accessible. This is everything from registering for the conference. The Web site for registering has to be accessible. When people get to the airport, do they have accessible transportation? When they're going to hotels, do they have accessible hotels? Is the conference accessible? Do you have it clearly marked? Where are the -- if you do have an alternative around the corner by the trashcans? (Away from microphone) so making the conference -- all the conference information that gets produced all of that has to be accessible. Sessions have to be accessible. If a person is in a wheelchair where do they come and sit? I think it is possible but you've got to think those things through. So before the Sendai conference, one of the other things I was so proud of is another transnational advocacy network we work with, disability inclusive disaster risk reduction network met in Daka to say let's first, before the conference, let's promote a series of disability inclusive principles that can be incorporated into the global framework on disaster risk reduction. And it was. So this is just fantastic and I wanted to end by saying that after Sendai, which I think is a major strategic framework to think about older persons and persons with disabilities, they have an annual, now become biannual follow-up called the global platform on disaster risk reduction. So the first one post Sendai was in Cancun Mexico. So the UN office of disaster risk reduction asked us as IBPP would we come to help make that conference accessible like the Sendai was accessible. We said no we don't have all of those resources to make the conference accessible but we can help you. What we decided to do was to help make it accessible but also to study the use that information technology could play in making that conference inclusive and accessible. So we have a paper that's on the web. You can find it called beyond being there for all of us comparing Web conferencing and mobile remote devices for accessible participation in global governance. So beyond being there comes from a famous study by Steneta in Holland in 1992 about how do you use technology to facilitate people projecting presence at a distance. So beyond being there. So the focus on just trying to get everybody in the same room was what everybody used to focus on. How many scholarships can you provide to get people in the room, so forth. This article back in 1992 talked about how do

you go beyond -- you're never going to get all the people in the same room at any given time. So how do you use technology to facilitate distributed collaboration so people can participate. The National Science Foundation took up that name and its blueprint on virtual organizations as sociotechnical systems and helped to participate in that process and so we wrote this article called beyond being there for all of us and we used this as a platform to study the role that Web conferencing could play in a global governance process and telepresence robots. So if you look at this picture here you might find this room familiar. Does that look familiar? It's right here, right? So we were -- this is not Mexico, right? So we were getting ready to go to the corns, my office is right down the hall, we decided let's practice what it would look like to have a mobile remote presence device be able to be at a conference and people to connect to it from anywhere in the world and be able to see what's going on.

Yeah. So we got a friend visiting us, this happens to be me, because we didn't plan appropriately. But a person anywhere in the country, anywhere in the world with Internet access and doesn't require super high bandwidth could participate in this process by using a mobile remote presence device. And I'm going to take a picture of Dr. Burley. Got you. So we studied these telepresence robots in Mexico at the global platform for disability -- didn'table disaster risk reduction. We had four of these robots and we had four remote hubs, you're now familiar with remote hubs, I was there from the beginning that have having remote participation in these kind of meetings and so forth and this remote hub idea makes a lot of sense. You could have people gather here but not a conference room like this and participate in Mexico but they could also listen to the presentations and sort forth but also talk amongst themselves. So you could have local experts and local subject matter experts talking about what's going on in the conference so the idea of remote hubs makes perfect sense. We did, we had four of these, four remote hubs, Daca, feejy, Brustles and AU, and we were able to connect disability advocates from around the world to the conference in Mexico how cute they looked in their little shirts and then the ones from Fiji put on a cool shirt a little bit more local this picture Dr. burley and I got a chance to speak about this, the person speaking is Dr. Mohammed, UN deputy secretary general. She was at the conference and she said I sure would like to meet, you know, these people, you know, all over the world but she's got a busy schedule. She said if you can get to the top of this escalator, I'll have a few minutes, her chief of staff told us this. If you can get to the top of the schairt I have a few minutes to talk to them before my next meeting W. a Web conference tool you couldn't have done of that. Would have been into a specific room somewhere. Can you get her into The room. She said no you got to come to the top of the stairs. So all the robots were running to get to the stop of the stairs. When she got there she was greeted by these robots all saying hi from all over the world and she started

talking to them and she said wow this is amazing. Later in her presentation she said I have just seen the greatest single example of technology for enhanced participation and development that she had ever seen or some phrase that I tried to capture. It was just phenomenal. Happy to tell you more stories about that. And I'm going to close now by just inviting you. I know everybody has a busy week, what's today? Next week. I can't be with you at I can because I'm going to New York tomorrow to the UN for the conference of state parties for the conventions on the rights of persons with disabilities. This is my first time back since COVID. I'm really excited to regather with my colleagues there so for the last couple of decades I've had to wrestle with do I go to IGF stuff or disability stuff and I started off with ICANN and IGF and then I started to move more for many years into the disability space and now I'm kind of going back and forth but it's hard sometimes when they happen exactly at the same time. So I won't be able to be at ICANN but I will be at the UN. But if anybody -- move that thing. Please move that.

Yeah, so if you want to register virtually, for our side event, we're going to have a side event on children with disabilities beyond reception, this idea of kind of make the right real. So we're going to have a panel on Thursday morning that looks at what are some of the things we can do to make this right real, not just on paper and I'm going to focus on article 30 on making the right to leisure, recreation, and sport real for persons with disabilities. How do we do that? I'm a so I willlor, boater. I'm going to talk about inclusive sailing and how you can modify sailing and sailing instruction and practice to be accessible to persons with mobility impairments and various kinds of disabilities and I'm going to talk about ways in which you can modify sailing and sailing training for children with learning differences to be able to adopt these stem principles and be able to go out on the water and take their parents out on the water. So I'm really happy to have had this opportunity to set the context for what we want to do here for the next two days and I look forward to any questions that you might have.

Thank you.

>> One question in the chat from Stacey.

You mentioned AI. What do you see AI accomplishing for the disability community in the next few years.

>> Please tell Stacey I'll send her a check tomorrow. I wanted to talk about AI. Didn't have it on my to do list for today. AI is something that I'm very passionate about. Something that I know many people are concerned about and thinking about. I'm just joking of course. I have no idea who Stacey is clear I want to be clear. In academic. So AI is

incredibly important to everything that we've talked about and like everything that we've talked -- oh, if anybody wants to play with the robot, you can drive it around. Might want to take first crack.

You can just push the buttons and drive it around. So like everything we've talked about that has both pros and cons, we're concerned about what's happening with AI as well. So particularly generative AI and we'll talk about this certainly or not sign language interpretation and Avatars, it's getting better able to make predictions about what words are coming next and so forth. So having virtual sign language avatars is something that's happening. We're doing a lot of work personally here at AU and my team looking at the ways in which AI can help measure the progress on the sustainable development goals. We're at the halfway point and there are not really any good measurements of how much progress we're making, including for persons with disabilities. So I could go on and on about that but AI certainly has a role to play in this space and it's something we should continue to be careful about as well.

Other questions?

He.

Yeah.

>> Accessibility in engineering in United States impresses me quite a lot.

>> I didn't hear the first part. I'm sorry.

>> Disability engineering that I see in United States elevators, escalators and so on, for a person coming from India, it's quite impressive, but same you were talking about global policy framework on accessibility. Why is this level of sensitivity and the degree of engineering not there in other countries, many other countries? I come from a country where the hospitals are very well equipped and I've seen orthopedic hospitals in a city which is a well equipped hospital that is not accessible that probably expects an injured person to climb up stairs so that is the first part of my question.

The other question --

>> Why don't we take that one just to make sure.

So I'm assuming everybody could hear online as well. So.

>> (Away from microphone).

>> Only my end exactly. Repeat again. The question is really -- you're doing a wheely right there. Whooh!. So the question is that the first part of the comment is that in the U.S. there seems to be a high level of accessibility engineering in place in different ways and why are other countries perhaps behind in that space and first I'll start by saying even though it appears that way in the U.S., there are lots of places that are not accessible in the U.S. It's not a done deal here either. In some cases it's done in a way that is not fully appropriate. Like the example I keep making here, I'm glad you can get into this space but you can't do it the way everybody else can. You have to go through this separate entrance and around by the trashcans and so forth. But it's better than nothing so it's good that you have that but what I would say is that as more countries adopt the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities and again we're at 186 countries now. Almost every country in the world has ratified the convention. Now, the U.S. hasn't. Some of you may be surprised that the U.S. hasn't ratified the convention. We signed it under President Obama, but senate failed to ratify it. And what ratification of a treaty means is that a countries either has identified that its legal and policy framework is in place to meet the spirit of what is in the treaty or committing to put in place this legal and regulatory infrastructure. So if you ratify the treaty, now you're giving the community tools to advocate for themselves to then put pressure on buildings, projects and sort to and so on. So as more countries put in place that legal infrastructure there's more infrastructure to -- like I talked about earlier, the lawsuits, awareness raising and sort forth. But here's the real key and this is for everybody. It's far more expensive to retrofit accessibility than to build it in from the beginning. If you don't spend one minute not thinking about accessibility it will not be. That's changing because a lot of the tools have accessibility features and checkers and so forth built into it but if you design something without thinking about accessibility it's not going to be accessible. Whereas thing about accessibility from the beginning, every time you create a picture, you quickly put an Alt tag on the picture. You just follow that process. Then it makes it accessible. If you're building a new transportation or hospital and you think about accessibility from the beginning, it will be just built in as a cost of doing business. But if you build your hospital and then say now let's make that accessible, it's exorbitant. It's really about thinking in advance of how to make things accessible is what I would say.

Let's see if there's others and then we'll come back to you.

Here, here and here and I see here. Yep. So here, here here and here.

>> My name is Sweti. Very active in the Pacific region. The question that I have especially when we talk about multistakeholder engagement, what we see is a lot of times the values are clear but when it comes to inclusion people are not so clear about the full value of how to include people. About a us ultimately when it comes to giving fellow ships it's always

driven to the point where merits are accounted. Talk about multi take hold concept, it is more about representation, it is more about the under represented people, especially group or sectors. I have done this discussion with the people and (Away from microphone) the awareness about how we are going to bring those people in, because ultimately they are part of our society.

>> 10:15, okay. Let me take a couple of questions and I'll come back to that.

>> (Away from microphone).

>> Yeah, exactly.

>> Thank you professor Derrick. This is Bebak from Nepal. Whenever we see the global policy but at the end the implementation is at the local level. So the why start talking about while hospitals are not accessible these are guided by way the local municipal acts and rules. My question is how do we fuel this change in local policy and implementation level? And how as a youth we can assist in them. Do we recommend any case study or resource that has you gave an example of professor Sen who said how economics change when we make things accessible. Do we have specific success stories by driving these change by implementation local level.

>> Outstanding question. Absolutely I'll get to that. Let's see if we can take the other two questions and I'll try to answer all three of them. One here and over here and then another one right there and another one here.

Oh, you're saying bye. Oh, you're saying bye.

Yes, sir.

>> Thank you, professor. We talk about disability. How can we engage the group model to reserve disability problem in Africa specifically?

>> Okay. Excellent. Okay, maybe two more and then my mind is going to be overtaxed.

>> Hello professor my name is Isha from Pakistan and my background is purely from academia and research. So I'm a researcher working at the technical security and policy actually. I am interested to know if you could share your thoughts on AI ethical issues, values in AI maybe for especially disabled people or you know groups of society that are actually marginalized?

>> Sure.

>> What are the possibilities.

>> Absolutely. Fantastic question. All right. I'm going to have to get my phone back so I can take some notes. You guys help me remember the questions. I see three that I want to just really jump on.

Yes, sir.

>> Thank you, Doctor, for the tremendous presentation. Extremely illuminating. As a country code top level domain priority, we have been very much involved in supporting a school from K-12 for visually impaired individuals and we have also -- we are also involved with a -- the deaf society in Puerto Rico as well. However, what we have not been able to do is to promote the development of more websites with this type of protocols that can help and enhance the participation of the members of the particular (Away from microphone). Is there a one site, one Web site we can find all the different protocols that can make accessibility such that we can make that available to other developers to make that awareness very much present to them while they're developing because you brought up a very important point, it is easier to integrate this in the development rather than having to add it afterwards.

>> Mm-hmm.

>> Thank you.

>> Absolutely.

So I'm going to take privilege to just answer these questions because I know we're out of time. Really quickly I'm going to be here for all two days. Level advocacy how do we bring - - make things happen at local levels because that's where policy is really happening and that's something that was important to us when we started the master's program as well because you want people to understand how to engage with public policy and public policy advocacy at a local level. It requires training, some strange if you will in policy advocacy in, you know, sustained engagement at a local level but we think it's also important to have those local level advocates linked with transnational advocates for a variety of reasons. When the concept of transnational advocacy networks was developed, one of the key concepts that came out of it was the boomerang effect. There may be some things difficult for you to raise at a local level that if you're connected with international transnational advocacy organizations, they can raise globally about your particular issues that you might not be able to raise locally. There's so many of these networks. I can tell you five that I'm actively involved with that would welcome persons with disabilities and allies to participate

in those networks. And the local level is critical. So at the work that we're talking about in cities, am I looking at the right person? That was your question? I'm just trying to find the person that asked the question.

On the work that we're doing around cities, so we talk about the new urban agenda for cities but the annual conferences go down to local levels. So we have mayors. There's a network of mayors and local cities where we've tried to focus on these accessible level at the city, local level. Absolutely on that one. On the youth side, there's some really interesting examples within those networks of youth organizing as well. So that transnational advocacy, local advocacy and transnational advocacy is what I would focus on. Going to come back to AI last. On the Web site development. So the set of principles under the WCAG is the best place to get the whole list of recommendations. Now there's an automated checker that you can use. It's called the WAI access I think is what it's called. You can feed it a URL and it will tell you what's wrong. And so then it will identify it for whoever's developing the Web site to try to address the problems. But I will say I feel responsible for saying if you want to do real accessibility testing you want to go beyond that and you want to have your Web site test it by actual users to see how they use it and how accessible it really is. I know that's an extra effort and responsible so if you just take the step of using the Web accessibility tester you'll get a sense of what's wrong and your developer can try to fix it. Now what if the developer doesn't have the skills to fix it? There's something called the international association of accessibility professionals and they participate in the CSUN conference every year so California state university north ridge has a center for disability studies that puts on a conference in San Diego every year. That group is a technology -- international technology and education conference and out of that conference was born the need to train more people who can do accessibility testing and remediation. So they created this association and it's phenomenal. They have a training path and a track that you could send people to to get that certification and then they could do it for you but they could do it nor all of the other websites in Puerto Rico as well. So that might be a good idea. That association has been absorbed by G3ICT, the global initiative for inclusive information and communication technologist. I told you I loved acronyms. Has absorbed the international association for accessibility professionals. I think we could definitely talk about that. And then lastly on AI and ethics, so one of the -- I have tremendous concerns and I can point you to some of the interviews I've given over the last couple of weeks in particular in the last month or so around some of these concerns but what I will say is you're right to have concerns around the ethics and to try to understand what are some of the ways to move forward. So a couple of kind of key principles to keep in mind is, one, and some of these things are not going to happen but this is what should happen. So one is there should be more regulatory guidelines put in

place. These companies are not going to regulate themselves. They have talked about how competitive this landscape is, how hard they're pushing in this direction and they're not going to regulate themselves. So we need -- they're asking for regulation. In the last few days, so for the last six months or so there's been a network times survey of AI experts that has been talking about to what degree do you think what you're working on in AI could threaten humanity and it was about ten or 15 percent said yes that it could threaten the existence of humanity. That was startling enough, right? But over the last two weeks the heads of all the major AI companies have come out and said this is an ex extent crisis that this has the ability to eradicate humans from the planet if we don't deal with this and this is not hyperly. This is moving so fast now and the models are being trained on so much data that they are as smart as everybody in this room, they can draw on everything that's written in this room, everything that's been said by everybody in this room times a million, a billion. It's drawing -- the models are drawing on everything that has been written and you need to know what the models are trained on. And there's a whole range of things put into the AI bill of rights that we can think about what kind of things could be put in place to limit some of this. I'm going to stop now because I know I'm over time and I just want to thank you -- I'll be here for two days and I look forward to talking to you.